

CITY OF FITCHBURG CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2016

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Koutonen, Harry Karis, Tom Starr, Mike Donnelly, Dennis DeGara, David Streb (6)

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Smith, Mike O'Hara

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, Fitchburg Fire Headquarters, 33 North St.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Notice of Intent - Edgewater Homes, Inc., 0 Rindge Rd. (near McKay School)
Applicant and his engineer need more time to respond to Commission's concerns & Tim's comments.
Hearing postponed to March 29th.

Notice of Intent - Fitchburg DPW - Shea St. Drainage Improvements, Phase II (cont'd from 1/26/16)
DPW Commissioner Lenny Laakso, and Adam Cline of DPW-Engineering Division present.
Recap of site visit Jan. 20. Oak Hill Country Club Board of Directors is OK w/ concept; it will need a vote of their Board to grant a drainage easement to the City to allow the work.
Motion made & seconded to issue Order of Conditions w/ standard conditions. Vote 6-0 in favor.

Request for Determination of Applicability - Fitchburg Community Development Dept., River St. streetscape improvements (cont'd from 1/26/16)
Andrew Leonard, Landscape Architect & Melissa Coady, Tighe & Bond present. Andrew showed list of proposed plantings on River & Main Streets and photos. Trees are drought tolerant. Trees on River St. will be columnar - up to 35 feet high when mature. Trees will be planted in loamed trench at back of sidewalk. Trench gives roots a direction in which to grow. The type of pear tree specified is also more drought resistant. Shouldn't overwater.

Q: Is there a maintenance plan?

Andrew: He will put together a maintenance plan. C. of Fitchburg will be responsible for maintenance. Maintenance will consist of clean-up in the spring, preparation in the fall, & a recommended watering schedule.

Mike D. – That must be spelled out to volunteers.

Andrew will prepare list of maintenance recommendations to give to volunteers.

Larry Casassa, Community Development Dept. - FSC has agreed to maintain (through their own landscape contractor) the plantings done recently on Main St. from North St. to Blossom St. Beyond Blossom St. is the City's responsibility. There is a public informational meeting on the project next Thursday, Feb. 25th at Riverside Commons. He will try to get business owners along River Street to help maintain the landscaping in front of their businesses.

Larry: Project is planned to go out to bid late winter, and construction planned to start in spring.
Mayor DiNatale: He will direct DPW to maintain the plantings on Main St. beyond Blossom St., and the new River St. plantings.

Mike D: Doesn't want another park in city that won't be maintained. City needs a full-time Tree Warden w/ a background in forestry. The City's tree budget should not be used to just cut down trees, but to plant and maintain trees.

Mini-roundabout has a one-foot wide mountable curb – no planting island in the middle.

Motion made & seconded to issue Negative Determination of Applicability. Vote 6-0 in favor.

Notice of Intent - Harrison, 0 Albee St. (adjacent to #186 Albee) - single-family dwelling in buffer zone

Pat McCarty, McCarty Engineering presented plan.

Tim reviewed his comment letter with Commission & Pat.

Abutter's comments:

Mr. Leclair, 98 Newton St. (across street) had concerns. He has been there for years and assumed lot across street couldn't be built on. He saw house at 186 Albee St. being built on fill.

Agreed to have site visit Sat. 2/27 @ 8:00 p.m.

Hearing continued until March 29th meeting.

Request for Determination of Applicability - Fitchburg Conservation Commission - Vegetation removal & trail maintenance, Greene's Pond, Ashby State Rd.

Negative DOA expired a couple of years ago. Commission has authorized this work to periodically clean out brush blocking the trails and for better visibility from the road.

Motion made & seconded to issue another Negative Determination of Applicability. Vote 6-0 in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ANRADs - off Hemlock, St. Jude & Ashburnham St. - extension, DiBiase

Request for extension will be referred to Tim for review.

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote unanimous.

Meeting adjourned: 7:10 p.m.

Next meeting: 3/29/2016

Minutes approved: 3/29/2016